

PLACES OF BUDDHIST INTEREST

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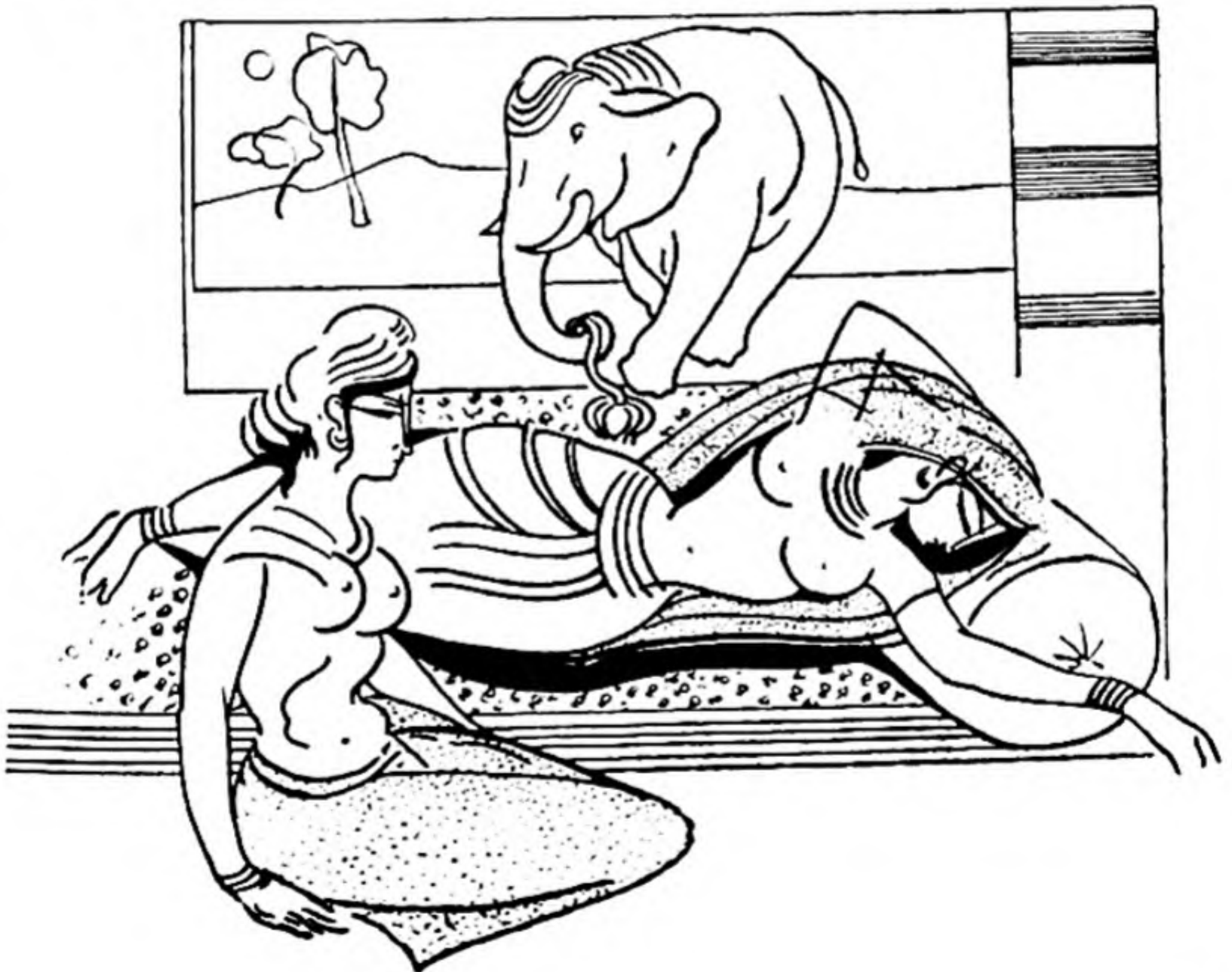
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NORTHERN INDIA

Gautama Buddha has left his footprint on the soil of India and his mark on the soul of mankind. This human teacher eclipsed even the heavenly gods and the places consecrated by his presence were held in great veneration. Before his parinirvana, the Buddha spoke of the four places which a pious believer should

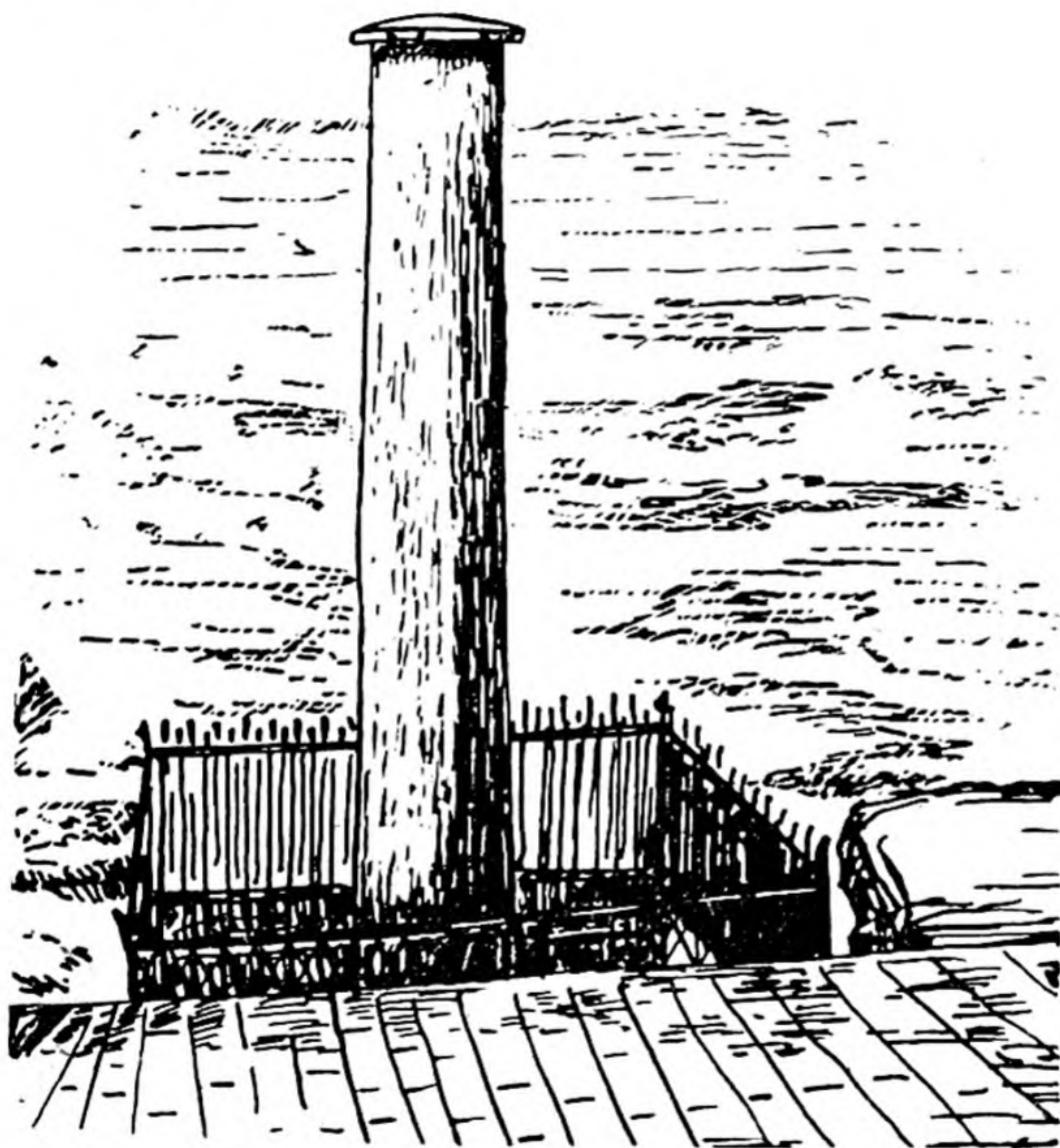


visit with faith and reverence. They are the Lumbini vana, where the Tathagata was born; Gaya (Bodh Gaya), where he attained bodhi (enlightenment); the Deer Park at Isipatana (Sarnath), where he proclaimed the Law for the first time; and Kushinagara, where he reached the unconditioned state of nirvana.

In the Buddhist sacred lore there are four other places which with the above four make up the atthamahathanani (ashtamahasthanani) or eight sanctified spots. They were the scenes of four of the principal miracles that the Blessed One was said to have performed. At Sravasti, the capital of Kosala, the Buddha gave a display of his miraculous powers to confound the leader of the Tirthika sect. Next, in accordance with the practice of the previous Buddhas, he ascended the heaven of the thirty-three gods, preached the Abhidhamma to his deceased mother and descended to earth at Sankashya. Rajagrhā, the capital of Magadha, was the scene of another miracle in which he tamed the mad elephant, Nalagiri, that had been let loose by his jealous cousin, Devadatta. In a mango grove at Vaisali, a number of monkeys offered him a bowl of honey. The famous cities in India at that time were thus hallowed by their association with the Buddha's religion.

These holy places became centres of great attraction for the pious believers, and pilgrimages were religiously undertaken to these places. Ashoka calls such pilgrimages dhammayata (dharmayatra), or tours

of piety. Many other places, too, rose to prominence as the influence of Buddhism spread. The places of Buddhist significance are many in the land of Gautama Buddha, and in their flourishing days their sanctity, no less than their splendour and magnificence, attracted visitors from far and wide.



Lumbini

Among the sacred places of Buddhism, Lumbini, where the Blessed One was born, must inevitably come first. It has been identified with the site of Rummindei in the Nepalese Terai. As the birth-place of the Buddha, the site grew in sanctity and importance. Many are the establishments that rose on the site. Very few, however, are now in existence. Of course, there still stands at the site a pillar engraved with an inscription commemorating the great Ashoka's pilgrimage to this place in the twentieth year after his consecration. "Here the Buddha was born", says the emperor, and this statement proves the identity of the sanctified spot beyond any doubt. Apart from the pillar, there is an ancient shrine with an image representing the nativity of the Lord as described in the sacred texts.

Bodh Gaya

Bodh Gaya, where the Buddha attained supreme wisdom (bodhi), lies six miles to the south of Gaya, a place of Hindu pilgrimage. To the devout Buddhist there is no place of greater interest or sanctity than the holy spot of the Buddha's enlightenment. Sacred shrines and stately monuments were raised all around and the account of the Chinese pilgrim, Yuan Chwang, gives us a glimpse of the past splendour of this sanctified site.

Yuan Chwang ascribes the erection of the original Bodhi shrine to Emperor Ashoka. According to one of



his rock edicts, Ashoka visited this place, which is called Sambodhi in the inscription, when he had been consecrated ten years, and it is more than probable that the great emperor constructed a shrine on this holy spot. No vestiges of such a shrine can, however, be found at present. Scholars are of the opinion that the Bodhi shrine carved in a Bharhut relief (circa 2nd century B.C.) may represent the one erected by Ashoka. It seems to have consisted of a balustraded

gallery enclosing the Bodhi tree, preceded by a column of the type on which Ashoka's edicts are carved. The original balustrades seem to have been of wooden construction, which were later translated into stone. The stately structure which we see nowadays is a later erection. This temple has been restored and renovated many times. From the description of Yuan Chwang it appears that the temple, essentially in its present shape and appearance, existed already in the 7th century A.D. The Mahabodhi temple in Burma is a prototype of this grand temple.



As it now stands, the Mahabodhi temple at Bodh Gaya is approximately 160 feet high and consists of a straight pyramidal tower surmounted by a stupa, complete with the harmika and the hti with a fluted amalaka-like lower member. The tower has angle amalakas at the corners demarcating its different stages. The entrance porch, evidently later than the original temple, is on the east. Each of the four sides of the tower presents several tiers of niches, while the front face has a tall lancet opening for the admission of light into the sanctum. At the base of the tower there rises a turret at each of the four corners, a miniature replica of the main spire.

The temple enshrines a great gilded figure of the Blessed One touching the earth, which symbolizes the supreme event of enlightenment. Along the northern side of the temple there is a narrow masonry platform raised about four feet above the ground. This is known as the "jewel shrine of the walk" or the Buddha's Promenade (*cankama*), where after attaining enlightenment the Great Teacher is said to have spent a week walking to and fro in deep meditation. At the points where he set his feet there are sculptured ornaments representing the miraculous blossoms which are said to have sprung up in his footsteps. Passing along this promenade and to the west of the temple stands the Bodhi tree and the holy spot of enlightenment, now marked by a red sandstone slab, representing the Vajrasana on which the Master is said to have reached Perfect Wisdom. The original Maha-

bodhi shrine, as represented in the early reliefs, is portrayed as enclosing this holy spot, including the Bodhi tree. The idea of erecting a temple with a lofty conical tower necessitated its erection a little to the east of this holy spot, so that the holy spot and the Bodhi tree now stand at the back of the temple.

Around the temple lie innumerable remains, of which the most important are portions of the stone railing, which represent two different periods of construction, the earlier going back to about the 2nd century B.C. and the latter to the early Gupta period. Interesting carvings are still to be seen on these rail posts, and of these the figure of Indra as Santi, and that of Surya, the Sun god, drawn by a four-horsed chariot, are noteworthy. Beautiful sculptures and richly decorated votive stupas, scattered all round, still continue to attract the admiring gaze of pilgrims and visitors. The residence of the Mahanta, who was for a long time in charge of the temple precincts, is close to the great temple and, like the sculpture shed nearby, is a store-house of fine sculptures and other relics which once embellished this holy spot. In the immediate vicinity are situated seven sacred sites, which, according to tradition, were identical with those where the Lord is said to have passed seven tranquil weeks in the enjoyment of his Buddhahood.

Sarnath

Sarnath marks the birth of the religion of Gautama Buddha. Hence it became a great centre of Buddhist

activities and remained so for more than a millennium and a half. The inscriptions refer to the site as the "Monastery of the Turning of the Wheel of Righteousness" (Saddharmacakra-pravartana vihara) by which name this sacred place was known to ancient Buddhist writers. Though very little is known of the history of the Deer Park during the early centuries of Buddhism, the place acquired celebrity, like the other holy places of Buddhism, from the time of Ashoka. This saintly monarch erected a series of monuments, including a pillar inscribed with an edict warning the resident monks and nuns against creating schisms in the church. The Chinese pilgrims, Fa-hien and Yuan Chwang, visited the place in the 5th and 7th centuries A.D. respectively, and left us valuable information regarding this important site. In later periods also, the site grew in size and prosperity, and inscriptions and other evidence relate to the building of new shrines and edifices, as well as to the renovation of old ones, one of the latest being the Temple of the Wheel of the Law, founded by Kumaradevi, one of the queens of King Govindacandra of Kanauj, in the first half of the 12th century A.D. Soon after, the place was destroyed, presumably by the armies of Muhammad Ghorî. There is evidence of earlier vandalism, once probably by the Hunas and later during the sacking of Banaras by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. Such damage, however, was immediately repaired by pious devotees, but this final catastrophe brought waste and desolation to the prosperous establishments.

The ruins of Sarnath cover an extensive area. The Archaeological Department has done a good deal of excavation at the site and a number of interesting monuments and sculptures of exquisite beauty and workmanship have come to light. As one approaches the site from Banaras, the first landmark that attracts the eye is a lofty mound of brickwork, locally known as the Chaukhandi, surmounted by an octagonal tower at the top. The mound represents the ruins of a stupa on a terrace basement, erected to mark the spot where the Buddha, on his way from Gaya to Isipatana, first met his five former comrades who were soon to become converts to his Faith.

Half a mile to the north is the site of the Deer Park, which must have had imposing buildings in the days of its pristine greatness. All is now in ruins, save a battered structure, the Dhamekh stupa, which rears its head to a height of nearly 150 feet above the surrounding country. The ruins have been laid bare by the spade of the archaeologist and the site, as exposed, shows that temples and stupas occupied the central position with monasteries in the area around them. They belong to different periods of construction, the earliest going back to the days of Ashoka. Traces of successive restorations and renovations are also evident in some of the important buildings.

The Ashoka stupa, seen by Yuan Chwang, has been identified with the ruins of a large brick stupa, commonly known as Jagat Singh's stupa after Jagat Singh, the Diwan of Raja Chait Singh of Banaras. He dis-

mantled it in 1794 for bricks for the construction of a market in Banaras. The site of this stupa probably marks the spot where the Buddha delivered his first discourse and thus literally turned the Wheel of the Law. A little farther to the north stands the broken stump of the Ashoka pillar, the magnificent Lion Capital which may now be seen in the Archaeological Museum nearby. On the east may be seen the ruins of a temple, designated the main shrine, which must date from the Gupta period, if not earlier.

Around the main shrine there is a paved court with a similar approach from the east. In this court are found innumerable remains of stupas of various shapes and sometimes also of shrines, the remnants of pious benefactors of votaries and pilgrims who flocked to this holy spot. On the north and south were ranged monastic establishments.

Among the ruins at Sarnath, the most imposing is no doubt the Dhamekh stupa, situated at the south-east corner of the site. Battered though it is, it still stands 143 feet high from its original foundations. Indeed, it is a solid structure, built of massive blocks of stone at the lower stage and of brick, probably faced with stone, at the upper. It is of cylindrical shape and is relieved in the lower section by eight projecting bays, each with a large niche originally containing an image. This lower section has a broad belt of carved ornamentation of intricate geometric pattern with floral arabesques above and below it. The modern name, Dhamekh, is probably derived from the Sanskrit

dharmeksha, meaning "the pondering of the Law", and since it is in line with the Dharmarajika stupa of Ashoka which stands due west of it, it must have been an important monument. The original structure on this spot also possibly dates from the days of Ashoka.

Apart from the ruins and relics of the past, a place of modern interest is furnished by the Mulagandhakuti Vihara, erected by the Mahabodhi Society, where are enshrined certain Buddhist relics discovered at Takshashila (Taxila), Nagarjunakonda and Mirpurkhas in Sindh.

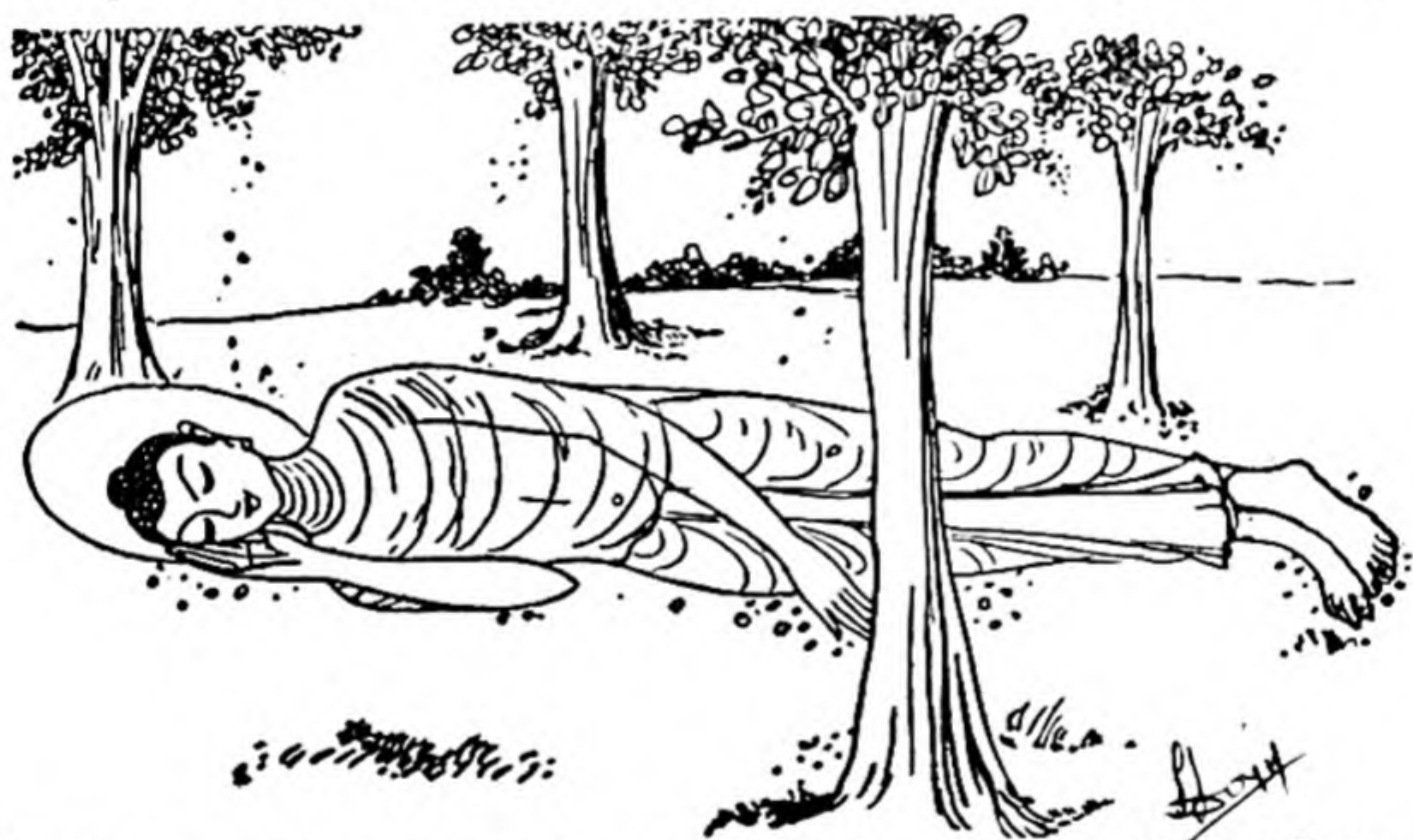
The antiquities so far discovered in the ruins are numerous and consist of sculptures, bas-reliefs, rail fragments, terra cotta figurines, seals and sealings, inscriptions, pottery vessels and various other objects. With very few exceptions, they pertain to the Buddhist religion and cover a period of approximately 1,500 years, from the 3rd century B.C. to the 12th century A.D. They have been housed in a neat little museum and a sculpture shed, situated near the ruins, which well repays a visit. The Lion Capital originally surmounting the Ashoka pillar now occupies a place of honour in the museum. It consists of four addorsed lions supported on an abacus over a bell-shaped lower member. The capital was originally crowned by a wheel, the fragments of which have been recovered from the ruins. Symbolical of India's message of peace and goodwill to the world, the capital now forms the crest of resurgent India.

One of the foremost of the sculptures in the

museum is the famous sandstone image of the Master in the act of setting the Wheel of the Law in motion (*dharmacakra-pravartanamudra*), which is a masterpiece of Indian plastic art.

Kushinagara

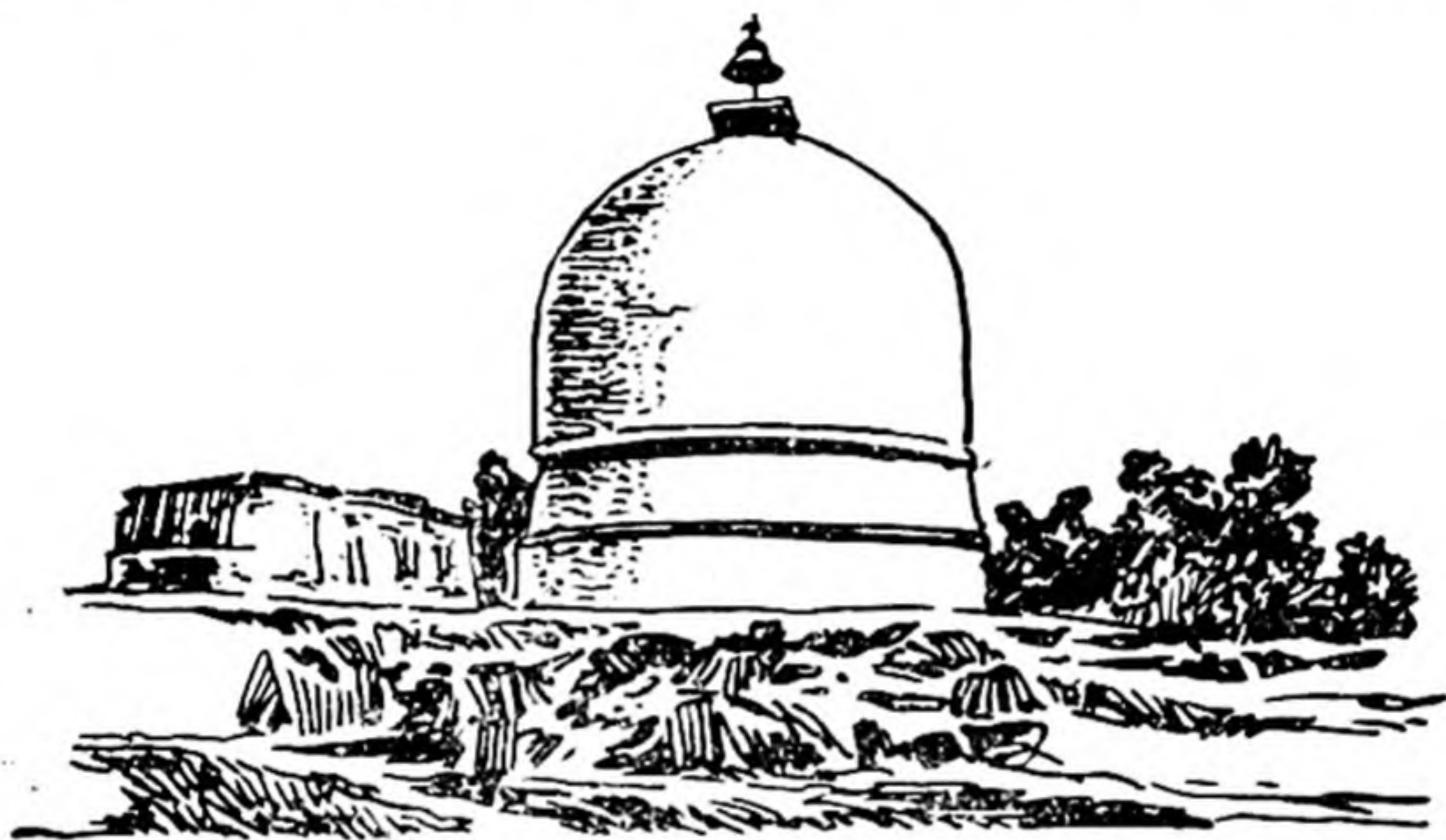
Kushinagara or Kusinara is sacred to Buddhist as it was the place where, under a grove of sal trees, the Lord passed into nirvana in his eightieth year. The



site has been identified with Kasia in the Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh.

Like the other sacred places connected with the eventful life of the Master, Kusinara rose to be an important place of pilgrimage and in the course of time was covered with sacred shrines and monasteries. For reasons unknown, however, the place was deserted early in its history, and both Fa-hien and Yuan Chwang

note the utter ruin and desolation of this once important site. The remains that have been partially laid bare by excavations are extremely fragmentary, but the identity of the place with the site of the parinirvana is settled beyond doubt by the discovery of inscriptions



referring to the Parinirvana Caitya. The stupa of parinirvana which Ashoka is said to have built has not yet been brought to light. The Parinirvana Caitya to which the inscriptions refer dates from the Gupta period and it is possible that the Asoka stupa lies buried under the later construction. Among the other sacred edifices that still remain may be mentioned the Matha Kunwar ka Kot, which enshrines a large recumbent figure of the Buddha in the state of nirvana. The image was found in fragments and has been skilfully restored by Mr. Carlleyle. The great stupa which stood on the spot where the body of the Lord was cremated and

where the relics of the Master were divided into eight equal portions is probably represented by a large mound locally known as Ramabhar. This mound has only been partially examined, and a more systematic exploration is expected to bring to light important material relating to the history of this venerable spot.

Sravasti

Sravasti (modern Saheth-Maheth in U.P.), the capital of the ancient kingdom of Koshala, is sacred



to the Buddhists because it was here that the Master, in accordance with the practice of the previous Buddhas, performed the greatest of his miracles. It was here that the Buddha had to take part in the contest of miraculous feats with the Tirthikas before King Prasenajit of Koshala and the assembled audience. The Buddha took his seat on a thousand-petalled lotus and created multiple representations of himself which went up to the highest heaven. The heretical teachers, discomfited at this miraculous event, dared not show their own feats and were finally confounded by a violent thunderstorm and obliged to run away. The supreme position of the Master was thus vindicated, and he preached the Law before a huge assemblage of people who had come to witness the miracle. The Sravasti episode has been a favourite theme in Buddhist art from very early times.

Even from the days of the Buddha, Sravasti was an active centre of Buddhism and it was here that the merchant Anathapindika built, in the garden of Prince Jeta purchased at a fabulous price in gold, a large monastery for the reception of the Master. The story of its purchase and its eventual presentation to the Lord was a favourite theme in early Buddhist art. In later times also shrines and monasteries arose on this sacred spot, which continued to be a flourishing centre of the Buddhist faith for a long time.

Saheth-Maheth consists of two distinct sites. The larger one, Maheth, spreads over about 400 acres and has been identified with the remains of the city proper.

Saheth, covering about 32 acres and lying about a quarter of a mile to the south-west, is the site of the Jetavana monastery. The excavations on the former site have laid bare the remains of the massive gates of the city and the ruins of other structures, indicating the prosperous state of the city in days gone by. The latter, sanctified by the Master's association, rose to be an important place of pilgrimage, and numerous shrines, stupas and monasteries were built in it. The remains so far brought to light date approximately from the Mauryan epoch down to the decadent days of Buddhism in the 12th century A.D. One of the earliest stupas, the original foundation of which may go back to the 3rd century B.C., if not earlier, contained some bone relics, probably those of the Master himself. A colossal statue of the Master was found at the site. One of the latest patrons of the establishment was Kumara-devi, the queen of Govindacandra, the Gadhavala king of Kanauj, who donated some land for the maintenance of the Jetavana monastery in the year 1128-29 A.D. Buddhism was already on the decline and the prosperity of this site finally ended with the Islamic occupation of the land.

Sankashya

Another holy spot connected with the life of the Master was Sankashya (Sankisha-Basantapur, Etah district, Uttar Pradesh) where the Buddha is said to have descended to earth from the Trayastrimsha heaven (Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods) where he went to

preach the Abhidharma to his mother and other gods. This event is said to have occurred after the Great Miracle was performed at Sravasti, as it was an immutable law that all Buddhas should resort to the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods after they had performed their greatest miracles. According to Buddhist legend, the Lord came down by a triple ladder, accompanied by the gods Brahma and Sakra, and the incident forms a favourite motif in Buddhist art. Owing to this sacred association, Sankashya came to be an important place of pilgrimage, and important shrines, stupas and monasteries were raised on the site in the heyday of Buddhism.

Both Fa-hien and Yuan Chwang visited the place and left interesting accounts of the important monuments. Through long neglect, however, all is now in crumbling ruins. The accounts of the Chinese pilgrims also are too meagre to admit of any proper identification of the remains extant. The present village is perched on a mound, locally known as the fort, 41 feet high and with an area 1,500 by 1,000 feet. A quarter of a mile to the south is another mound, composed of solid brickwork and surmounted by a temple, dedicated to Bisari Devi. Other mounds containing masses of brickwork may be seen scattered around, and there are also the remains of an earthen rampart over $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in circumference. The trial diggings, undertaken long ago by Cunningham, indicate the extremely fragmentary nature of the remains and of the urgent necessity of more systematic explorations. The El-

elephant Capital that once surmounted a column is an important relic of the days of Ashoka, and further explorations are expected to lay bare important material which has relevance to the history of this site.

Rajagrha

Rajagrha, (modern Rajgir in the Patna district of Bihar), the capital of the powerful state of Magadha, was sacred to the Buddhists for more than one reason.



Not only did the Master go into retreat several times in this famous city, but it was also the place where Devadatta, his wicked cousin, made several attempts on his life. Moreover, in this city, in the Sattapanni (Saptaparni) cave of the Vaibhara hill, was held the first Buddhist Council (Sangiti) just after the parinirvana.

The remains of the ancient city are few and far between. The site appears to have suffered much at the hands of time. The ruins indicate that the followers of different religious denominations lived here. The Buddhist remains, except for stray and isolated images, are scanty, and it is not impossible that the visible monuments were denuded partly through religious animosities. Even the identification of the Sattapanni cave, the site of the first Council, is not beyond doubt. According to the canonical texts, the cave was situated on the northern fringe of the Vaibhara hill and Stein may be right when he identifies the site with the large terrace with a group of cells at the back in a semi-circular bend of the rock on the northern scarp. A remarkable structure, known as Jarasandha ki Baithak, on the eastern slope of the Vaibhara hill, with irregular cells at the sides has been identified by some with the residence of Pippala. Some of the Pali texts describe the Pippala cave as the residence of Mahakashyapa, the organizer of the First Council. From the cyclopaeian masonry, analogous to that of the city walls and its bastioned gateways, this erection appears, however, to be more military than

secular or religious in character. A mound to the west of the citadel is usually connected with a stupa, which, according to Fa-hien, was built by Ajatashatru, and by Ashoka according to Yuan Chwang. Trial diggings on this mound have exposed several strata, none of which, however, can be traced back to the pre-Christian epoch. The cave, called the Sonbhandar, on the southern scrap of the Vaibhara hill might have been a Buddhist excavation, though the possibility of its having been a Jaina establishment cannot altogether be ruled out. The Grdhrakuta mountain, which was a favourite resort of the Buddha, is not far from the city.

Rajagrha was also an active centre of Jainism in ancient times, as it is now, and interesting remains of Jaina shrines and sculptures are still extant. A singular monument may be recognized in the cylindrical brick shrine almost at the centre of the old city. It is known as Maniyar Matha, and was dedicated, according to local tradition, to the worship of Mani-naga, the guardian deity of the city of Rajagrha.

Vaisali

The city of Vaisali (Basarh in the Muzaffarpur district of Bihar), the capital of the powerful Licchavi clan, was a stronghold of Buddhism in the early days. Gautama Buddha is said to have visited it three times during his life-time. In one of these visits several monkeys are said to have offered the Lord a bowl of honey, an incident mentioned among the eight great events in the life of the Master. It was here again

that the Buddha announced his approaching nirvana, and after the nirvana the Licchavis are said to have erected a stupa over their share of the remains of the Master. A little over a hundred years after the nirvana, the Second Buddhist Council was held here. To the Jainas also Vaisali is equally sacred, being the birth-place of Mahavira, the twenty-fourth Jaina Tirthankara.

The site of Raja Bisal ka Gadh is believed to represent the citadel of Vaisali. It consists of a large brick-covered mound about 8 feet above the surrounding level and slightly less than a mile in circumference. Originally surrounded by a ditch, it was approached by a broad embanked causeway from the south. Trial diggings have exposed the foundations of old buildings of irregular plan which may date back to the Gupta period. All these buildings were of a purely secular character. The most interesting finds consist of a large number of clay seals, official and private, the latter bearing the names of individuals or guilds of merchants, bankers and traders. The official seals indicate that Vaisali was an important administrative headquarters in the Gupta period, and an interesting seal, engraved in characters of the Maurya period, refers to the patrol outpost at Vaisali.

The Chinese pilgrims, Fa-hien and Yuan Chwang, visited Vaisali in the course of their travels. The latter described the city as covering an area of 10 to 12 square miles. He wrote that, within and without and all around the town of Vaisali, the sacred monuments were

so numerous that it was difficult to mention them all. Unfortunately, the area is now practically denuded of any visible remains of religious edifices.

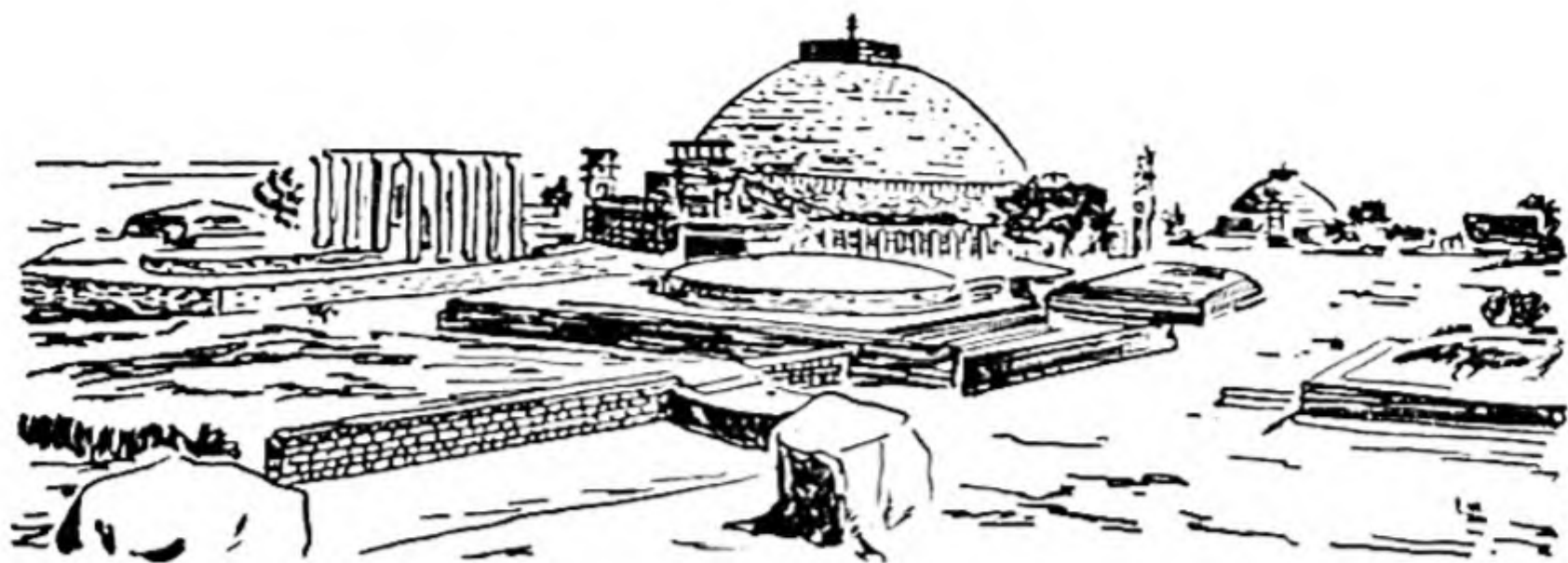
At Kolhua, two miles to the north-west of Raja Bisal ka Gadh, there stands a monolithic pillar (locally known as Bhimsen's Lath) of highly polished sandstone surmounted by a bell-shaped capital that supports the sedent figure of a lion on a square abacus. It is about 22 feet above the present ground level, a considerable portion having sunk underground in the course of time. In style it resembles the edict pillars of Ashoka, but diggings round the shaft have failed to reveal any Ashokan inscription. Nevertheless, it can be identified with one of the Ashoka pillars mentioned by Yuan Chwang at the site of ancient Vaisali. The line of pillars in the Champaran and Muzaffarpur districts—at Ramapurva, Lauriya Araraj, Lauriya Nandangadh and Kalhua—is believed to have marked the stages of a royal journey from Pataliputra to Lumbini which Asoka undertook in the 20th year of his consecration. Nearby, to the south, there is a small tank, called Rama-kunda, identified by Cunningham with the ancient Markata-hrada (monkeys' tank), believed to have been dug by a colony of monkeys for the use of the Buddha. To the north-west there is a ruined mound, at present only 15 feet high and with a diameter of about 65 feet at the base, which has been identified with the remains of the Ashoka stupa mentioned by Yuan Chwang. On the summit of this mound stands

a modern brick temple, enshrining a medieval image of the Buddha.

It will not be out of place to recount also a few other memorable sites of Buddhism, the sites of sacred shrines, stupas and monasteries. In the course of the spread of Buddhism in India, such sites, though not particularly associated with the life and legend of the Buddha, rose to prominence on account of the imposing monuments that were raised in and around them. Of these, Sanchi, in the former Bhopal State, is important as the site of one of the earliest of the stupas which later grew into an important centre of Buddhist monuments. Takshashila, (modern Taxila), now in West Pakistan, also rose to be a very prominent site in the early days. Kaushambi, the capital city of the Vatsa kingdom, was an early centre of Buddhism, and it was here that the famous Ghoshitarama Vihara stood. The remains of this monastery have been laid bare in the recent excavation of Kosava, the site of ancient Kaushambi, while in the medieval period the Nalanda monasteries in Bihar were famous throughout the Buddhist world of that time. In the days when Buddhism flourished, many other sites, too, became important sites of the Good Faith (Saddharma).

Sanchi

Sanchi, 549 miles from Bombay, is the site of the most extensive Buddhist remains now known in India. The site had no apparent connection with the traditional history of Gautama Buddha; the place is scarcely



mentioned in Buddhist literature. Even the itineraries of the Chinese pilgrims, which are a mine of information about the other ancient centres of Buddhism, do not refer to this site at all. It is surprising, therefore, that the monuments at Sanchi should now form the most magnificent and perfect examples of early Buddhist art in India. There seems to be considerable force in the view that Sanchi is the modern representative of the Cetiyagiri of the Ceylonese Chronicles, which was situated in the neighbourhood of Vidisha. It is connected with the story of Ashoka's marriage with a merchant's daughter and the erection of a monastery on the hill where Mahendra, Ashoka's son by that marriage, is said to have halted on the way to his proselytizing mission in Ceylon. Whether the story is true or not, the fact remains that the earliest monuments at Sanchi date from the time of Ashoka, and it is not impossible that it was the patronage of this Constantine of Buddhism which made the place an active centre of the religion of Gautama Buddha and was responsible for the splendour of the site in days gone by.

Most of the monuments are situated on a plateau on the hill-top, which was enclosed by a wall of solid stone about 1100 A.D. Of the stupas, there are many dating from the 3rd century B.C. They vary in size, ranging from the Great Stupa that measures 100 feet in diameter at the base and has a vast, imposing dome nearly 50 feet high, to miniature ones no more than a foot high.

Originally built of brick in the time of Ashoka, the Great Stupa was enlarged to nearly twice its previous size and faced with stone perhaps a century later, when the massive balustrade and the four imposing gateways were added. These gateways (toranas) on the four cardinal faces constitute, with their richly carved decorations, a most striking contrast with the simplicity of the structure behind. All the four gateways are of similar design, and the technique employed in their construction shows that they were more the work of carpenters than of stonemasons. The gateways, with columns and superstructures, are richly carved with bas-reliefs illustrating the Jataka tales, scenes in the life of the Master and important events in the subsequent history of the Faith. Reference may be made to one singular relief panel in an architrave of one of the gateways, which represents the visit of Ashoka to the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya. The greatest patron of Buddhism has not been portrayed in any other monument in India. This portrait of the emperor may not be authentic, but this unique representation

of one of the greatest figures of Indian history must be cherished by all his countrymen.

Of the many other stupas on this site, three are specially noteworthy. One of these, stupa No. 3, is to the north-east of the Great Stupa and, although smaller, is of almost identical design. In the relic chamber of this stupa, General Cunningham discovered the relics of Sariputta and Mahamoggallana, two of the famous disciples of the Lord, which were recently brought back from London for consecration in a new shrine at Sanchi. Another small stupa, near the foot of the hill on the western side, enshrined the relics of Kashyapa and Moggaliputta, well-known Buddhist apostles of the 3rd century B.C.

In the surrounding region, groups of stupas lie scattered, and of these a few have proved to be of particular sanctity on account of the relics enshrined in them.

Of more historical value are the battered remains of the Ashoka pillar, with its capital of four lions back to back. It is situated close to the south gate of the Great Stupa at Sanchi. On its broken stump one can still see the edict in which the emperor forbids in strong terms any schism in the Church. Its lustrous polish, its design and style place it with similar edict pillars of Ashoka.

The chief fascination of Sanchi no doubt rests on these grand old stupas, not only on account of their sanctity but also because of their rich and elaborate carvings. This fascination is further enhanced by the

shrines and monasteries that cluster around them and give a vivid picture of monastic life on this peaceful hill-top. Among these, the most noteworthy is the Caitya Hall (Temple No. 18), situated directly opposite the south gateway of the Great Stupa; it is especially interesting as one of the few examples of this kind of structural edifice.

Another structure recalling the classic temples of Greece may be seen in a tiny and unpretentious shrine (Temple No. 17), consisting of nothing more than a simple flat-roofed square chamber with a pillared portico in front. Though modest in dimensions, its structural propriety, symmetry and proportions, appreciation for plane surfaces and restraint in ornament may very well compare with the best architectural creations of classical Greece.

Of the monasteries at Sanchi, there are five examples, and they date from the 4th to the 12th century A.D. The earlier ones, once occupying the site, were built of wood and have perished or been buried under the foundations of later structures. Those that have survived, or are now exposed to view, are built more or less on the usual plan of an open quadrangular court surrounded by ranges of two-storeyed apartments.

The incomparable monuments of Sanchi were rescued from centuries of oblivion as early as 1818, and a host of scholars and archaeologists have tried to resuscitate this memorable site of the past. The major part of the exploration and restoration work goes to the credit of Sir John Marshall, a former Director-General

of Archaeology in India, who has not only excavated the numerous remains but also recreated the structures.

Nalanda

The far-famed monastic establishments at Nalanda (Bargaon near Rajgir) were of supreme importance in the history of latter-day Buddhism. According to tradition, the place was visited several times by the Buddha, and the history of the monastic establishments can be traced back to the days of Ashoka. But excavations have not yet revealed any proof that it was occupied prior to the time of the Guptas; and inscriptions, seals and other remains, coupled with references



in literature, provide a glimpse of the flourishing state of this famous monastic site from the 5th to the end of the 12th century A.D. It was at this monastery that the celebrated Chinese pilgrim, Yuan Chwang, stayed

for some time. He gives a detailed and graphic account of the different establishments, with as many as 10,000 inmates, their rules and practices. He also mentions Harsha and several of his predecessors as beneficent patrons of this institution. I-tsing, another Chinese traveller, has also left us a picture of the life led by the Nalanda monks, who were maintained by 200 villages donated by different kings. Nalanda was known throughout the Buddhist world of that time for its learned and versatile teachers, and the names of Acarya Silabhadra, Santarakshita, and Atisha or Dipankara, shining luminaries among a galaxy of many others, conjure up a vision of the supreme eminence of the Nalanda Mahavihara throughout its prosperous history.

The ruins of Nalanda extend over a large area. The structures exposed to view represent only a part of the extensive establishment and consist of monastic sites, stupa sites and temple sites. Lengthwise they extend from south to north, the monasteries on the eastern flank and the stupas and the temples on the west. The monasteries were all built on more or less the same plan in each case, with rows of cells preceded by a corridor round a central courtyard and a shrine against the back wall, opposite the entrance. Different strata, accumulated one above the other, are clearly seen and indicate successive repairs and renovations. There is also evidence that these monasteries were storeyed structures; and they convey, even in their ruins, a memory of their imposing and glorious past.

Stupa site No. 3 represents a huge structure stand-

ing in the middle of a court on the south-western flank, surrounded by a number of votive stupas.

To the north of this stupa and in the same alignment, there have been exposed structures, each of which consists of a temple erected directly over the remains of an earlier one.

In the museum nearby are deposited numerous sculptures and other antiquities recovered during the excavations, and these, by their great variety and fine workmanship, are most impressive.

The wealth of epigraphic material is no less telling. It includes copper-plate and stone inscriptions and inscriptions on bricks and terra-cotta seals. Among the latter, we have the official seal belonging to the community of venerable monks of the great monastery.

The Buddhism that was practised at Nalanda and other contemporary institutions in Bengal and Bihar was no longer the simple Hinayana; nor was it the Mahayana of the early days. It was strongly imbued with ideas of Tantrism not far removed from Tantric Brahmanism. The Muslim invasion dealt a death blow to these cloistered strongholds and the flickering remains of the religion of Gautama Buddha, which had been so transformed as to have been absorbed, almost unawares, into modern Hinduism.

WESTERN INDIA

It cannot be said with certainty when Buddhism spread to Saurashtra. However, there seems to be no

reason to suppose that any form of Buddhism existed in the province before Ashoka sent his missionaries to propagate it. He had one of his edicts incised on a rock at the foot of Mount Girnar near Junagadh in the heart of the province. Buddhism soon spread in the province as a result of his activities, and several Buddhist caves have been excavated in the southern and south-eastern parts of Saurashtra. From their extremely simple architecture, and from the general absence of sculpture, it would seem that they belonged to a very early period, probably the 2nd century B.C., if not earlier.

Junagadh

Junagadh, the capital of the province, which owing to the presence of the Ashoka edict had already become famous among Buddhists, became a centre of attraction for them. In the vicinity of the Girnar Hills we find on a huge rock the full text of what is known as the Fourteen Rock Edicts. The text, inscribed in Brahmi characters on this rock, is remarkably well preserved. Naturally, the most important of the caves excavated in Saurashtra are in and around Junagadh. They must have been very numerous and continued to be important at least up to the middle of the 7th century, for, while visiting Junagadh, Yuan Chwang noticed at least fifty convents with at least three thousand monks of the Sthavira sect. These caves fall into three groups, namely, those in Junagadh proper, those in Uparkot and those called Khaprakhodia, close to the town. The caves at Junagadh have two to three storeys and have

been excavated in three stages. Two of them measure 28'×16' and 26'×20'. Among the caves in Uparkot, which was the citadel of the old city, the caitya windows, the deep tanks, measuring 17 feet square, and the two wells, popularly called Adicdi-vav and Navaghan-vav, are the most interesting. One of the three KhapraKhodia caves, locally known as Khanjarmahal, measures 250'×80'. The other is 38 feet square, and the third measures 60'×60'. The second and third caves have four and sixteen heavy pillars, respectively. No inscription has been found in any of the caves.

One can imagine from the evidence on the spot that in early times large monasteries must have existed at Junagadh and Mount Girnar. The remains of two brick-built stupas have recently been exposed at Intwa, on a hill about three miles away from Ashoka's edict. The only inscribed object found there is a baked clay seal belonging to a bhikshusangha, which resided in the vihara of Maharaja Rudrasena. This king was most probably Rudrasena I of the Kshatrapa family, who ruled from 199 to 222 A.D.

Besides Junagadh, many places have become important in Saurashtra owing to the Buddhist caves found there.

Dhank

Dhank is thirty miles north-west of Junagadh and seven miles south-east of Porbandar. Here, four plain caves are preserved, the rest having been destroyed through decay in the soft rock. However, the octagonal

pillars with their square bases and capitals still stand. There are also to be found some rude mythological sculptures of a later date, besides a well called after Manjushri.

Siddhasar

A few miles to the west of Dhank is Sidhasar, where there are a number of caves situated in a ravine called Jhinghar Jhu.

Talaja

Besides Junagadh, Talaja, thirty miles south of Bhavanagar near the mouth of the Satrunjaya river, also seems to have been a great Buddhist centre. There are 36 caves and a tank measuring 15'×20'. One of the largest of the caves is locally known as Ebhalmandap and is 75'×67½' and 17½' high. It had four octagonal pillars but no cells. One of the caves had a dagoba. The simplicity of the arrangement and the complete absence of sculptures in the caves show that they belonged to an early date, probably only a little later than the reign of Ashoka.

Sanah

The caves at Sanah, which is to the south-west of Talaja and sixteen miles north of Una, are important. Both sides of the hill are honeycombed with more than 62 caves. They are of a plain type and well supplied with tanks for water. The largest of them is locally known as Ebhalmandap and measures 68½'×61'×16½'.

It has six pillars in front but none inside. Although the caves in Saurashtra are among the most ancient, they do not possess the interest that attaches to many of the same period found elsewhere. Among the numerous caves there is not a single caitya cave which can be compared with the caves of this class in other parts of the country. The viharas, too, are very simple and do not show any important architectural features.

Valabhi

From the 6th century A.D., Buddhist activities in Saurashtra seem to have centred in a new place called Valabhi, twenty-two miles to the north-west of Bhavnagar. It acquired great importance as a place of Buddhist interest, and Yuan Chwang spoke of it in glowing terms when he visited it in 640 A.D. According to him, there were one hundred convents where six thousand devotees of the Sammitiya school resided. In those days, Valabhi was considered to be next in importance to Nalanda as a centre of Buddhist learning, and became the home of the renowned Buddhist scholars, Sthiramati and Gunamati. Not less than thirty copperplate inscriptions of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. have been found. These record that land grants were given by the Maitraka rulers of Valabhi to no fewer than fifteen Buddhist monasteries built there by members of the royal family, their officers and Buddhist saints. The inscriptions, however, do not state whether any of these monasteries enshrined the earthly remains of Buddhist saints.

Unfortunately, Valabhi is now in ruins, and nothing remains to prove its former glory.

Kampilya

Curiously enough, we do not come across any place of Buddhist interest in Gujarat proper. Only a solitary place named Kampilya, near Navasari, seems to have been of some importance. A copperplate inscription of the Rashtrakuta king, Dantivarman of Gujarat, dated S. 789 (867 A.D.), records that, after bathing in the river Puravi (modern Purna in the Surat district), the king donated lands at the request of the monk, Sthiramati, in favour of the Kampilya vihara, where there lived five hundred monks of the Sangha of Sindhu Desha. Another inscription of the Rashtrakuta king, Dhara-varsha, records a similar grant to the same monastery in S. 806 (884 A.D.). It seems that the Buddhist community migrated from Sindh, presumably for fear of the Muslims, and founded a vihara at Kampilya, which was already known as a sacred place.

Buddhism was most popular in Maharashtra from the time of Ashoka, who sent Buddhist missionaries to preach there and had one of his edicts engraved on a rock at Sopara on the West Coast. From this time right up to the decline and disappearance of Buddhism, Maharashtra continued to be favourably inclined towards Buddhism. Consequently, a number of Buddhist places of interest are to be found in the province. It is well known that, just as Buddhist structural monasteries were built above ground in flat regions,

Buddhist rock-cut sancturaries were always excavated underground in hilly tracts. The latter could not, therefore, be at places sanctified by the association of the Buddha or of Buddhist saints. The Sahyadri mountain in western Maharashtra with its hard trap was best suited for rock-cut architecture. It was accordingly honeycombed with cells at every possible spot, so that the majority of the Buddhist caves in India are found in western Maharashtra. It was also customary in ancient times to adorn these caves with mural paintings. The skill involved in rock-cut architecture and its decoration was held in such esteem that the masons who excavated the caves and the artists who decorated them were rewarded with gifts of land, as is evident from some of the inscriptions.

The places in Maharashtra which assumed great importance in Buddhist times owing to their rock-cut architecture are Bhaja, Kondane, Pitalkhora, Ajanta, Bedsa, Nasik, Karle, Kanheri and Ellora (Verula).

Bhaja

The earliest caitya hall, dating from the 2nd century B.C., is found at Bhaja. The inward slope of the pillars, the wooden roof girders and the free use of timber show that this hall was an imitation of a wooden prototype. The actual use of wood in rock-cut architecture is a special feature of the earlier period. The octagonal pillars near the walls are plain. Traces of paintings on the pillars and figures of the Buddha attended by chauri-bearers are still discernible.

Sculptures of Surya and royal personages riding on elephants can also be found.

Kondane

The Buddhist caves at Kondane, which is seven miles from Karjat, are of slightly later date than those at Bhaja. The facade pillars are in stone instead of wood. The caitya hall is one of the earliest and is an important landmark in the development of rock-cut architecture.

Pitalkhora

In the Buddhist caves at Pitalkhora, seven painted inscriptions are found which record the names of the Buddhist monks who bore the cost of the frescoes.

Ajanta

There are no fewer than twenty-nine caves of various sizes at Ajanta. They are cut in the hard volcanic rock, some of them going as far as 100 feet into the rock, which is naturally considered a remarkable architectural achievement. Cave No. 1 is the finest vihara in India. The caitya hall in Cave No. 10 measures 100'×40'×33', and its stupa has a double tier at the base and a slightly elongated dome. Cave No. 26 contains a gigantic sculpture of the Buddha, considered to be one of the finest in the whole of India. However, Ajanta is more famous for its beautiful paintings than for its architecture or for the carved sculptures in the caves. The walls, the ceilings, and the pillars of nearly all the caves were once decorated with



paintings, remains of which are found only in thirteen caves. They depict chiefly scenes from the life of the Buddha and the Jatakas, but there are many paintings of a secular nature, too. The court life of the period and scenes of everyday life are graphically depicted in the frescoes. Indian painting reached its finest development in the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. and the best can be seen at Ajanta. Everything is drawn with grace and mastery and delicately modelled. As an artist has said, the more one contemplates the Ajanta frescoes, the more one appreciates the subtle relationship that exists between the groups of figures.

Bedsa

The caitya hall at Bedsa, which is four miles

south-east of the railway station of Kamshet, measures $45\frac{1}{2}' \times 21'$. The base of the column is vase-shaped and its capital is surmounted by pairs of men and animals seated on kneeling horses and elephants. Traces of paintings can also be seen on the pillars in the stupa.

Nasik

There is a group of twenty-three caves, dating from the 1st century B.C. to the 2nd century A.D. at Nasik. Some of these were altered and adapted by the Mahayana Buddhists between the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. Cave No. 3. called the Gautamiputra Vihara, is large, having six pillars with carvings of elephants, bulls and horses on the capital. Cave No. 10 is called the Nahapana vihara. The caitya halls at Nasik and Junnar are more or less of the same type. The Nasik caves are especially important for the interesting and beautiful inscriptions of Nahapana, Gautamiputra and Sriyajna Satakarni.

Junnar

There are as many as 130 caves carved in five separate groups within a radius of four miles from Junnar. Hence the town can be said to be the largest monastic establishment in western India. The frequency and smallness of the cells indicate that they belong to an early period.

Karle

The caitya hall at Karle is of the same general

pattern as that at Bhaja. In size and splendour, however, it is one of the most magnificent monuments in India. In fact, it is described in one of the ancient inscriptions found at the place as the most excellent rock mansion in Jambudvipa. It was excavated by Bhutapala, a merchant of Vaijayanti. Fortunately, it is also among the best preserved. It measures $124' \times 46\frac{1}{2}'$ and the vaulted roof rises to a height of 45'. It has a row of fifteen monolithic pillars on each side with kalasha bases and bell-shaped capitals surmounted by kneeling elephants and horses with men and women riders. Its two-storeyed facade has an enormous sun-window. The caitya hall dates from the close of the 1st century B.C.

Kanheri

There are more than one hundred caves at Kanheri which was also a large monastic establishment. From a number of inscriptions found here, dating from the 2nd century A.D. to modern times, a more or less connected history of the place can be reconstructed. The beginning of the caves can be attributed to the reign of Gautamiputra Satakarni (about 180 A.D.). Many excavations and sculptures were added from time to time. The introduction of the Buddha image in the establishment is shown by a 4th century inscription recording the dedication of a Buddha image by a certain Buddhaghosha. The Silahar rulers of Puri, who were feudatories of the Rashtrakuta sovereigns, took a special interest in the Buddhist establishment at

Kanheri and made liberal donations to it, as recorded in their copperplate grants dated S. 765, 775 and 799. Inscriptions of S. 913, 921 and 931 further show that the Buddhist monks continued to occupy the caves. A modern Japanese inscription of a Buddhist pilgrim of the Nichiren sect, engraved on the walls of Cave No. 66, testifies to the continued importance of the caves even in modern times.

Some inscriptions found in Kanheri incidentally tell us of Buddhist viharas situated at Kalyan and near Paithan, of which we know nothing from other sources.

Ellora

At Ellora (Verula) can be found the most wonderful caves in the world, mountains cut into colossal sanctuaries. Of the thirty-four caves, the twelve to the south are Buddhist while the remainder are Brahmanical or Jaina. The Buddhist caves are the earliest, dating from 450 to 650 A.D. The entrance to the hall lies through a large open court. The caitya hall, which is called the Vishvakarma Cave, measures 48 square feet. A huge image of the Buddha, flanked by attendants and flying figures, is seated on a lion throne in a projecting arch of the stupa. There are a number of Buddha and Bodhisattva images. Two of the monasteries with wide courtyards in front are three-storeyed and rise to a height of 50 feet. These impressive structures and their execution show remarkable ingenuity.

Other important sites

Besides these, there are many other places of Buddhist interest, each with a number of excavations, some of them as old as any in western India. A number of these also contain inscriptions of interest.

One of the sites of these caves is Kuda, on the shore of the Rajapuri creek, forty-five miles south of Bombay. Another is Mahad on the Savitri^{*} river, twenty-eight miles south-east of Kuda. At Karhad in the Satara district, there is an extensive series of sixty caves on the spur of the Agashiva hill. The cells here are small, the large halls are devoid of pillars and there is a complete absence of sculpture. There is another series at Shelarwadi. Two women disciples of Thera Bhadanta Siha are said to have had the caitya hall at this place excavated, and one of the caves was donated by the wife of a ploughman. At Kondivte, three miles from Jogeshwari, there is a group of nineteen caves. In the Sholapur district at Ter (ancient Tagara) there is a structural caitya hall which was built in the 8th century A.D. and later transformed into a Brahmanical temple. In 1188 A.D. the Silahar king, Gandaraditya, built a Buddha temple at Kolhapur, on the bank of a tank called Gandasagara.

Goa

That Buddhism flourished in and around Goa, farther south, in the 6th century A.D. is proved by the discovery of the Hire-Gutti (north Kanara district) plates which record an endowment to a Buddhist

vihara by the Bhoja king, Ashankita of Goa. Similarly, the discovery of Buddhist statues of a later date in the village of Mushir in the Goa district shows that Buddhism continued to flourish for a considerable period. Buddhist monks in Goa at the time of the Kadamba king, Jayakeshin, are referred to in the Dvyashraya-kavya of the 12th century.

Karnatak

Buddhism began to exercise its influence in Karnatak from the time of Ashoka, whose edicts at Siddhapur and in the neighbourhood are found in the province. His missionaries carried the message all over the land, as a result of which many Buddhist monasteries were built at Vanavasi at the time of the Satavahanas. Later, however, probably owing to the stronger influence of Jainism and Brahmanism, the influence of Buddhism declined. A place named Dambal in the Dharwar district seems to have become important as a Buddhist centre in the 11th century A.D., as seen from an inscription of S. 1017 (1095 A.D.), according to which a temple of the Buddhist deity, Tara, and a Buddhist vihara were built at the place by the sixteen settis (sreshthins or merchants) of Dambal during the reign of Lakshmidevi, the queen of Vikramaditya VI, over the district of eighteen agraharas. It is believed that another temple of Tara was built at the same place by Setti Sangaramaya of Lokkigundi.

SOUTHERN INDIA

If a number of places in Maharashtra attained great importance in Buddhist times on account of their wonderful rock-cut architecture, there were certain places in Andhra which were famous for their equally magnificent Buddhist stupas. Buddhism was well established in Andhra in the time of Ashoka, if not earlier, owing to its situation midway between Magadha, the home of Buddhism, and Ceylon, which had already become a stronghold of Buddhism and with which Andhra had seaborne trade through its big river ports. As the Buddhists were largely recruited from the commercial classes, their wealth was utilized to raise magnificent stupas.

Such stupas were built at several places in the region between the lower valleys of the Krishna and the Godavari. A number of Buddhist sites, from Salihundun in the north to Chinganjam in the south, have been discovered, of which the following are the most important since they possess magnificent stupas.

The stupas at Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda in the Guntur district, and at Bhattiprolu, Jagayyapeta, Gusiwada and Ghantshala in the Krishna district were built between the 2nd century B.C. and the 3rd century A.D. These consisted of brick-built hemispherical domes and were characterized by rectangular projections from the base of the dome at the four cardinal points. They were finished with plastic grace, painted white, and embellished at the base with sculptured

white marble panels richly carved in low relief. The technical skill and artistic excellence of the Andhra craftsmen are best seen in the construction of the stupas, and especially in the manufacture of small caskets of crystal and other jewellery.

The earliest Buddhist monument in the region is the Bhattiprolu stupa, built in the 2nd century B.C. probably by a Buddhist missionary during the time of a local king named Kubiraka. The claim that it was a mahastupa enshrining the mortal remains of the Buddha is justified by the discovery of a bone relic inside a crystal casket together with flowers made of gold and pearls.

Amaravati

Amaravati, which is 16 miles west of Guntur, is the most important Buddhist site in Andhra. The stupa at this place is the largest and most famous. It was first begun as early as the 2nd century B.C. and was enlarged between 150 and 200 A.D. by the efforts of Nagarjuna. Its dome measures 162 feet and has a height of 95 feet. The width of the pradakshinapatha is 15 feet, and the railing surrounding it is 14 feet high. This stupa is larger than the Sanchi stupa, which is 120 feet wide and 54 feet high.

The beautiful railings depict scenes from the Buddha's life. The relief medallions, beautifully balanced in composition, are among the greatest works of art in India. The Amaravati stupa could well vie in artistic beauty and grandeur with the Sanchi and

Bharhut stupas in the North. Like the Mathura and Gandhara schools of sculpture, the Amaravati school enjoyed great influence. Its products were carried to Ceylon and South-East Asia and had a marked effect on the local styles.

Nagarjunakonda

Nothing was known of the great stupa at Nagarjunakonda or the Hill of Nagarjuna before it was discovered twenty-five years ago. It is situated on the south bank of the river Krishna in the Guntur district. It was also a mahastupa, enshrining the mortal remains of the Buddha, and was probably built in the time of Ashoka. It was renovated with additions by Santisiri and other ladies of the local Iksvaku royal family, to whom goes the credit of making Buddhism popular in Andhra in the 3rd century A.D. Now it is in ruins, which are greater than those at Amaravati. Hundreds of remarkable sculptures executed in the Amaravati style have been found. From the inscriptions on the Ayaga pillars, it is evident that Nagarjunakonda, the ancient city of Vijayapuri, was of great importance as a centre of Buddhism and enjoyed international fame. Several monasteries were built at this place for the residence of Buddhist monks of different schools coming from different countries like Ceylon, Kashmir, Gandhara, and China.

The people of Andhra traded in and outside the country and had close contacts with the Roman world

of the time. This is proved by the discovery of inscriptions, of sculptures depicting a bearded soldier wearing a tunic and trousers, and of various other objects of Roman origin.

In Andhra, Guntupalli, 28 miles north of Ellore railway station, and Sankaran, a mile east of Anakapalli, are important for their rock-cut architecture. Other places in the neighbourhood appear to have assumed significance in Buddhist times, as the presence of stupas and other antiquities testifies. The most notable among these are Goli, Chezarla, Gummati, Bezwada Garikapadu, Uraiyr, Kuvain, Chinve and Vidyadharpur.

Nagapattam

Nagapattam, near Madras on the East Coast, had a Buddhist settlement in the time of the Colas. An important copperplate inscription of the 11th century A.D. states that the Cola King, Rajaraja, gave the village of Anaimangalam for the maintenance of a shrine of the Buddha in the Culamanivarma Vihara which the Sailendra king, Maravijayottung Varman of Sri-vijaya and Kataha of Indonesia, had erected at Nagapattam. In the epilogue of his commentary on the Netti-pakarana, Dhammapala mentions this place and the Dharmashoka Vihara in it, where he composed this commentary.

Srimulavasam

Srimulavasam, on the West Coast, had Buddhist

settlements in the time of a ruler bearing the same name. In the great temple at Tanjore scenes from the life of the Buddha are represented in decorative panels.

Kanci

Kanci, with its Rajavihara and its hundred monasteries, was a famous stronghold of Buddhism in the South. Five Buddha images have been discovered near this town.



The famous Pali commentator, Buddhaghosa, has mentioned in his commentary (the *Manorathapurani*) that he wrote it at the request of the Venerable Jotipala, who was staying with him at Kancipura. Yuan Chwang also mentions a certain Dharmapala from Kanci as being a great master at Nalanda. In Korea, an inscription in verse has been discovered. In a preface to it, written by Li Se in 1378 A.D., there is an account of the life and travels of an Indian monk called Dhyanabhadra. This account tells us that this monk was the son of a king of Magadha and a princess from Kanci, and that when he visited Kanci he heard a sermon given by a Buddhist preacher on the *Karandavyuha-sutra*. Clearly, this place was a recognized centre of Buddhism as late as the 14th century A.D.

